

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Please cancel Claims 38, 40, and 55 and amend Claims 19, 28-29, 37, 39, 47, 74-76, and 78 as indicated in the following Listing of Claims.

Listing of Claims:

1-18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently amended) A planar structure comprising:

a linoleum sheet formed of a linoleum base composition, the linoleum sheet containing over the entire thickness thereof flakes comprising an organic polymeric material, the flakes being compatible with the linoleum base composition and having a ~~particle size in the range of 0.5 mm to 30 mm~~ and a thickness in the range of 1.0 μm to 400 μm ;

wherein the thickness of the flakes is less than the thickness of the linoleum sheet, ~~and wherein the flakes are oriented substantially parallel to the surface of the linoleum sheet.~~

20. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 19 wherein the thickness of the flakes is within the range of 1.5 μm to 50 μm .

21. (Canceled)

22. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 78, wherein the at least one dicarboxylic acid is maleic acid, itaconic acid, fumaric acid, succinic acid, methylsuccinic acid, malic acid, furandicarboxylic acid, phthalic acid, tartaric acid, or citraconic acid, or a mixture thereof containing at least two of these acids.

23. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 78, wherein the polycarboxylic acid is selected from citric acid, aconitic acid or trimellitic acid.

24. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 78, wherein the derivative of the di- or polycarboxylic acid is an anhydride or a partial ester.

25. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 24, wherein the alcohol component of the partial ester is a polyol.

26. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 78, wherein the mixture of at least one di- or polycarboxylic acid or derivatives thereof is a mixture of a partial ester of maleic acid anhydride and dipropylene glycol with citric acid.

27. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 78, wherein the at least one epoxidation product of a carboxylic acid ester is epoxidized linseed oil, epoxidized soybean oil, epoxidized castor oil, epoxidized rape-seed oil or vernonia oil, or a mixture thereof containing at least two of these epoxidized products.

28. (Currently amended) The planar structure according to claim 19, wherein the flakes are present in an amount ranging from 1 to ~~[[15]]~~ 10 wt-%, based on the total amount of linoleum base composition.

29. (Currently amended) The planar structure according to claim ~~[[19]]~~ 28, wherein the ~~planar structure~~ linoleum sheet has a thickness in the range of 0.8 mm to 4.0 mm.

30. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 19, wherein the flakes are single-colored or multi-colored.

31. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 30, wherein the flakes are provided with an optical brightening agent, a fluorescent agent or a phosphorescent agent or a mixture thereof.

32-36. (Canceled)

37. (Currently amended) A planar structure comprising:

a linoleum sheet containing flakes distributed throughout the entire thickness of the linoleum sheet, wherein the flakes comprise an organic polymeric material and wherein each of the flakes has a thickness between about 1.0 μm and about 400 μm and the linoleum sheet has a thickness in the range of 0.8 to 4.0 mm;

~~wherein the thickness of the flakes is less than the thickness of the linoleum sheet, and wherein the flakes are oriented substantially parallel to the surface of the linoleum sheet.~~

38. (Canceled)

39. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim ~~[[38]]~~ 37, wherein each of the flakes has a thickness between about 1.0 μm and about 100 μm .

40. (Canceled)

41. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein each of the flakes has a thickness between about 1.5 μm and about 50 μm .

42. (Canceled)

43. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 79, wherein the carboxylic acid is at least one dicarboxylic acid.

44. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 43, wherein the at least one dicarboxylic acid is selected from maleic acid, itaconic acid, fumaric acid, succinic acid, methylsuccinic acid, malic acid, furandicarboxylic acid, phthalic acid, tartaric acid, citraconic acid, or mixtures thereof.

45. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 79, wherein the carboxylic acid is polycarboxylic acid.

46. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 45, wherein the polycarboxylic acid is selected from citric acid, aconitic acid, trimellitic acid, or mixtures thereof.

47. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim 79, wherein the carboxylic acid is a carboxylic acid derivative from an anhydride, a partial ester ~~and~~ or mixtures thereof.

48. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 47, wherein the alcohol component of the partial ester is a polyol.

49. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 48, wherein the polyol is selected from dipropylene glycols, propanediols, butanediols, hexanediols, hexanetriols, pentaerythritols, glycerins, or mixtures thereof.

50. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 79, wherein the organic polymeric material comprises a mixture of citric acid with a partial ester of maleic anhydride and dipropylene glycol.

51. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 50, wherein the mixture comprises up to about 50% by weight citric acid.

52. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 50, wherein the mixture comprises up to about 25% by weight citric acid.

53. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 79, wherein the epoxidation product of a carboxylic acid ester is selected from epoxidized linseed oil, epoxidized soybean oil, epoxidized castor oil, epoxidized rape-seed oil, epoxidized veronia oil, or mixtures thereof.

54. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein the linoleum sheet includes from about 1% to about 15% by weight of the flakes.

55. (Canceled)

56. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein the flakes are single-colored.

57. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein the flakes are multi-colored.

58. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein the flakes include at least one agent selected from an optical brightening agent, a fluorescent agent, a phosphorescent agent, or mixtures thereof.

59-73. (Canceled)

74. (Currently amended) The planar structure according to claim ~~[[19]]~~ 76, wherein the thickness of the flakes is within the range of about 1.0 μm to about 100 μm .

75. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim ~~[[37]]~~ 74, wherein ~~each~~ the linoleum sheet includes from about 1% to about 10% by weight of the flakes ~~has a thickness between about 1.0 μ m and about 100 μ m.~~

76. (Currently amended) A planar structure comprising:
a linoleum sheet formed of a linoleum base composition, the linoleum sheet containing over the entire thickness thereof flakes comprising an organic polymeric material, the flakes being compatible with the linoleum base composition, wherein each of the flakes has a thickness in the range of 1.0 μ m to 400 μ m and ~~a particle size in the range of about 1.5 mm to about 10 mm~~, wherein the linoleum sheet includes from about 1% to about 15% by weight of the flakes, ~~wherein the planar structure has a thickness of about 0.8 mm to about 4.0 mm, and wherein the flakes are oriented substantially parallel to the surface of the linoleum sheet.~~

77. (Previously presented) A planar structure comprising:
a linoleum sheet formed of a linoleum base composition, the linoleum sheet containing over the whole cross section thereof flakes comprising an organic polymeric material, the flakes being compatible with the linoleum base composition and having a thickness in the range of 1.0 μ m to 100 μ m, wherein the organic polymeric material comprises the reaction product of: a) a mixture of a partial ester of maleic acid anhydride and dipropylene glycol with citric acid; with b) at least one epoxidation product of a carboxylic acid ester or a mixture of the epoxidation products.

78. (Currently amended) The planar structure according to Claim 19, wherein the organic polymeric material is selected from a material containing: 1) the reaction product of a) at least one dicarboxylic acid or one polycarboxylic acid or derivatives thereof or a mixture thereof with b) at least one epoxidation product of a carboxylic acid ester or a mixture of the epoxidation products; 2) poly(meth)acrylates; 3) polyvinylacetates; or 4) a mixture thereof.

79. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to Claim 37, wherein the organic polymeric material comprises at least one polymer selected from a poly(meth)acrylate, a polyvinylacetate, a product of a reaction between a carboxylic acid and an epoxidation product of a carboxylic acid ester, or mixtures thereof.